



# Office for Victim Assistance

## Fact Sheet: Victim Assistance Rapid Deployment Team (VA RDT)

### Who is on the VA RDT?

- Multi-disciplinary team consisting of Analysts, Special Agents and Victim Specialists selected after a rigorous selection process; serving a three year term
- Specially trained in responding to mass casualty events on tasks such as: victim identification, victim response management, crisis communication, resource coordination and personal effects management
- Two Crisis Response Canines (CRCs) trained to provide victim support through non-threatening, non-judgmental engagement

### What does the VA RDT provide?

- Death notifications utilizing a national model
- Emotional and logistical support to victims and their family members
- Liaisons between victims and the investigative team
- Coordination of timely family briefings/site visits
- Coordination of a Family Assistance Center (FAC)
- Cleaning and return of personal effects

### When is the VA RDT utilized?

#### **The VA RDT is a critical and invaluable resource:**

- When the FBI needs to fulfill its legal responsibilities to victims of mass casualty crimes such as terrorism, criminal aviation and rail disasters
- When the FBI is requested to support state and local agencies investigating violent acts involving the killing or attempted killing of multiple individuals and the local community lacks the capacity to adequately manage the victim response

The VA RDT can be requested through the Assistant Director, OVA, or her/his designee

### Why request the VA RDT?

- Provides a practiced and compassionate face of the FBI to those most impacted by mass violence
- Applies extensive experience in managing predictable challenges and developing practicable solutions to address highly sensitive situations
- Coordinates the federal and FBI response with state and local agencies, non-governmental organizations and other federal agencies to maximize available resources for victims and families
- Ensures timely provision of OVA Terrorism and Emergency Victim Assistance Funds to support victim and family needs
- A competent and compassionate response to victims and families is critical to building trust and rapport and assuring the public the government is supporting victims

### Where has VA RDT responded?

- Virginia Tech, VA 2007
- Binghamton Immigration Center Shooting, NY 2009
- Colgan Air, Buffalo, NY 2009
- Fort Hood Shooting, TX 2009
- Tucson Shooting, AZ 2011
- Sandy Hook Elementary School, Newtown, CT 2012
- Boston Marathon Bombing, BS 2013
- Navy Yard Shooting, Washington, DC 2013
- Fort Hood Shooting, TX 2014
- EAME Shooting, Charleston, SC 2015
- Grand 16 Shooting, Lafayette, LA 2015
- Umpqua Community College, Roseburg, OR 2015
- Inland Regional Center, San Bernardino, CA 2015